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ABSTRACT

"The People and the University" Conference, held at the University of California, Davis, on June 22, 1973 was concerned with redirecting research priorities for land-grant schools, particularly work done by agricultural scientists. Also discussed were the social and human implications of the work being done in the colleges. The presentations at the conference were associated with family farms, organic farming, alternative approaches to marketing and consumer concerns, technologies that stress nonwasteful use of energy, and poverty programs. The workshop summaries include alternatives to agribusiness; alternative technologies, paths out of poverty, alternative markets, consumer needs, and economic aspects of farming. Comments are also included from university officials. The participants of the conference committee are listed. (Author/PG)

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Summary of

"THE PEOPLE AND THE UNIVERSITY

A Conference

To Initiate the Redirection of Priorities for University Research

Convened on

June 22, 1973

University of California

Davis, California

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
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We would like to hear from you--feedback on the conference, suggestions for future work, or any other comments you want to make. Please address correspondence to Isao Fujimoto, Department of Applied Behavioral Sciences, University of California, Davis, California 95616; Phone: (916) 752-1805.

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UC Davis

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Isao Fujimoto, Conference Coordinator

Conference Committee: Isao Fujimoto, Martin Zone, Allan Owen, Joyce Sakai, Valerie Anderson, Henry Esbenshade, Bill Kopper, Marshall Hunt, Jon Hammond, Karim Alipour Fard, Geoff Allen, Ron Erickson.

Introductory Remarks

by Isao Fujimoto, Moderator

This conference on "The People and the University" can be considered a very radical departure for a land grant college to be undertaking, or it can be interpreted as a very conservative move--it all depends on how you look at things and the words we choose to explain what we see.

When I used to be involved with the concerns of foreign student visitors, I recall one student being briefed on the social graces. This concerned ways to express appreciation and praise to a hostess. "If you really want to tell an American hostess that things are great and she is also great, tell her she's 'cool'" was the advice given. So, at the end of this particular gathering, the student who was given the advice on interpreting things as "cool" was overheard to say, "Gee, lady, you know, you don't look so hot."

Whether or not we're doing the "cool" thing is not so important as the fact that the concerns are "hot" and relevant. The focus of this conference is to consider the concerns of different publics which have legitimate claims on the resources of the University and to also examine the priorities of research and action that appear to be creating greater social inequities.

It'd be instructive to review some of the predecessors inspiring the call for this conference. On the surface, it appears that many of the forerunners to this gathering here can be labeled "radical." The most immediate event was the recent National Conference on Land Reform. This gathering, held in San Francisco just this April, gave some attention to the role of the University as it affects the quality of life, as one of the issues pertaining to the institutional crisis in this country. The responsibility of the University was highlighted about a year before, with the publication of Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times by the Agricultural Accountability Project. They put the finger on a lot of barriers, touched or untouched by land grant colleges. Going back a couple of years, the ecology issue with everyone--including and especially the establishment getting into the act--brought a lot of questions and suspicions. But the movement did have some impact on the University system. Going back further on this campus, about six years ago, a couple of departments were confronted by students sitting outside their doors challenging the faculty to confront questions such as, "How does the University research on mechanization support riots?" In other words, what has been the social cost of the priorities placed on technological advancement without consideration of its implications? In some ways, we can trace our concerns back to the efforts of Ralph Nader. But I'd like to take the issues being raised in this conference back more than a hundred years to the original mandate of the Morrill Act of 1862. The charge given to the land grant colleges then was "to serve all the people." I see us trying to follow through on this original mandate. That some people can interpret what we're trying to do here as being very radical suggests that it isn't people who take seriously such basic charges as "radical," rather it's that something drastic has happened and is happening to this society. Rather than contribute to the problem by non-involvement or mutual suspicion, it's time that people and the University got together.

Instead of a Faustian University creating sorcerer's apprentices, we need a situation where the University produces knowledge that truly serves the people.

So we brought together people who can articulate some of the questions and concerns of the different publics that are part of "the people" that the Morrill Act intended that land grant colleges serve. And also, we're glad to have with us the participation of various faculty that have expressed interest in the questions that are being raised. Among those gathered today are those associated with family farms, organic farming, alternative approaches to marketing and consumer concerns, technologies that stress non-wasteful use of energy, as well as those active in organizing people out of poverty--be it moving farm workers into cooperative farming ventures or raising big questions on the nature of power and the distribution of resources in this country. I think there's a lot we can learn from each other.

What we'd like to focus on this morning is to hear presentations from the various constituencies on how they see the University, especially on the issues and questions that concern them, and how they see the University responding to them. Hopefully, they'll be some laying out of an agenda of questions that will challenge those who are part of the University system to investigate as part of their research thrust.

To questions concerning the origins and auspices of this particular conference--the impetus comes basically from several projects on the UC Davis campus, directed towards issues that have arisen because of the primary attention given to production agriculture and agribusiness. One of these is a project looking into the social implications of research, examining what's been done and why, also raising questions about the costs as well as benefits, especially in human and social terms. Another group has begun to examine the alternative technologies, particularly the development of low energy use strategies. A third project focuses on the factors contributing to the viability of small family farms. It's been the deliberation and joint thinking of individuals connected with these projects that brought about this conference, with the prime auspices being assumed by the social implications of research project.

Inasmuch as this conference focuses on questions, a comment concerning question-asking might be in order. I know that we've all been told that there is no such thing as a dumb question. It's not so much whether a question is dumb or not. A more important distinction to make is to ask whether or not a question is honest. Honest questions are those that are raised to get at information, to seek out knowledge. Dishonest questions are those that are used to deflect attention, to put off the speaker, or to by-pass what the issues might be. I would hope that the stress would be on the raising of honest questions. A similar distinction might be made on the discussion concerning growth and efficiency. The question is not so much whether growth and stress on efficiency is good or bad. The important distinction is to ask whether moves for growth and efficiency are socially responsible or irresponsible.

Letter from

Jim Horgan, Research Director
United Farm Workers, AFL-CIO

First of all, as you must know, the United Farm Workers and many others regard UC Davis as an instrument of the growers--a research subsidy to go along with their water subsidy, tax subsidy, labor subsidy, and direct payments subsidy. A very nice set-up, paid for by the taxpayers. What I hear you saying is that there are people at Davis who want to change this, people who are asking, "What can we do?"

I suppose there are three approaches you could take:

1. Stop the machines. It seems to us that the model your research specialists are aiming toward is the 40,000-acre Superior Farming Company, whose computerized and automated grove heaters, drip irrigation systems, and mechanical harvesters have produced a "marvel of technology applied to agriculture." But what's been the cost in people's jobs and lives? "Efficiency" apparently has no room for farm workers.

We know what a close relationship outfits like Superior have with UC Davis. We've seen the bumper stickers in the Viticulture Department--"Eat California Grapes, the Forbidden Fruit" and "Chavez Eats Grapes." That doesn't surprise us. We know where you're at. And we don't object to efficiency in agriculture. But we do reject irresponsible "efficiency" which gives no care for the lives of the farm workers who, like the growers, make their living in agriculture.

We're not so naive as to believe that this cold-hearted research apparatus can be halted, but you and our supporters there know the University better than we do, and you may have some ideas on that.

At least there could be pressure to force the growers to pay for their own research, rather than feed off the taxpayers. Farm workers are taxpayers too. What is Davis doing with their tax money, other than using it to destroy them? The rationale that such research helps promote agricultural efficiency and increase the nation's food supply, and thus is "good for America" is a phony one. Would factory workers tolerate a government grant to General Motors to study ways to increase efficiency by eliminating their jobs? Research should be done to promote jobs, not eliminate employment. The public's money should be used to benefit the public.

2. See that genuine consideration is given to farm workers. Agricultural economists and grower research specialists always seem to speak of them as "farm labor," a "cost factor" to be reduced or eliminated. So, if they're just a commodity to be evaluated and dealt with, no one has to consider farm workers as people. And clearly, those grower researchers don't.

But perhaps you could bring some real consideration to bear for the effect of that research on farm workers.

We know that many of the mechanical harvesters are not designed to save money for the growers and in fact, are not cheaper to operate than harvesting by hand. Their real purpose is to get rid of farm workers so the growers can escape from the farm workers' union. That's no secret. The growers cry, "Chavez is coming! Give us machines!" And the University obliges.

The effect on farm workers needs to be considered. I'm not suggesting a token farm worker representative on the committees that decide these things. When Arizona passed its right-wing anti-union law last summer, Governor Jack Williams was quick to offer a seat on his five-member Agricultural Labor Relations Board to the UFW, who would have joined two growers, a Teamster, and a "neutral" representative of the public, who would have set down rules by a 4-1 vote to destroy the farm workers' union in Arizona. We rejected this generous offer, just as we would have done the proposal Ronald Reagan was ready to make had Proposition 22 passed last fall.

In the past year or two, ecology groups have pressured government to force industry to undertake environmental impact studies" before any reckless construction is publicly funded. I don't know if those things are really any good, but at least they force a consciousness of the environment. Maybe you could push to see that "farm worker impact studies" are done and that no research proceeds which would take away their jobs and wreak havoc with their lives.

And you may know other tactics which would force the University to give genuine consideration to the effect of its research on farm workers.

3. Use the resources of the University to help farm workers. We have found in our eleven years of organizing that we are only successful when we have power. The forces farm workers are up against are powerful and entrenched--the growers, the politicians who cater to them (especially the Republicans), and company unions they fabricate (especially the Teamsters), and the public institutions they manipulate (especially universities like Davis).

Our goal is to organize the two and a half million farm workers in the United States. The weapons we have are the power of our members to strike and the power of our supporters across the country to boycott those commodities to bring economic pressure to force those growers to recognize the right of the farm workers they employ to have the union of their choice. Appeals to reason, morality, and democracy are useless. They only understand economic power.

Obviously, knowledge is a kind of power too. And you're sitting on a gold mine of information at UC Davis. What we need is anything which will enhance our power to deal with the forces we're up against. I don't mean studies of farm worker attitudes or re-training programs. Farm workers don't want to be re-trained. They want to live and work in dignity. And that's the fundamental purpose of the union.

You must know, better than we do, what sources of information you have that would help us understand this agricultural complex and deal with it more effectively.

Those of you who support us can be helpful in our success, and we welcome your assistance. Stop the machines, if you can. See that genuine consideration is given to the effect on farm workers of the research your university is doing. And as a public institution, share with us the information you're producing on American agriculture. We're part of agriculture too. And our union is here to stay.

Summary of Presentation by

Wendell Lundberg*
National Farmers Organization

Mr. Lundberg began by talking about the changes in the University in the twenty years since he attended. "At that time, it was quite popular to think of good farming practices in terms of rotation, as using cover crops, and other things that had been developed to increase the production of our agricultural industry. But at the same time, we were addressing ourselves to another word that had something sort of magic about it--that was efficiency. It was a word that was going to cure everybody's ills--it was the way you were going to survive...

"Since then, we've replaced committed producers with speculators and money managers--people who have completely lost the goal that the original people in agriculture had..."

"Today, the right to share in the wealth, to be involved in the (agricultural) industry has been taken away, because we have become disoriented. Efficiency has been applied to the wrong thing--not to people oriented efficiency, but money type efficiency--what can make the most dollars, not what is best for people...

Mr. Lundberg and his three brothers have built up a farm of approximately 3000 acres. "But our days are numbered--we're going to be replaced because someday we're not going to be efficient; we're not going to be able to compete... I think our goals have been poorly established--not on production of quality food, but on how cheap it can be produced. We haven't established our research in the best way to do things, but rather, who is giving the grants and how do these things make money for those giving the grants."

There are many ways to solve the production problems of agriculture. There is work being done on weed control in rice, but none biologically or mechanically, "because the grants aren't available." Money is given to test chemicals so that companies "can extract money from agriculture and make a profit."

Mr. Lundberg then talked about natural weed control systems--flooding, water control, crop rotation--but these aren't important to most people because they don't make money for companies.

Another thing we need to do is make the consumer more involved in the production of his food... This could communicate to the producer what the person wants and educate the consumer to some of the problems that producers have."

Mr. Lundberg went on to talk about the rise in food prices--"This is the first time I've seen prices as good as when I started farming 20 years ago. The cost of production has gone up tremendously."

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*Mr. Lundberg is an organic rice farmer in Butte County and the Vice-President of the National Farmers Organization; he is also interested in catfish hatcheries.

But our key goal is producing food cheap, not producing quality food (the goal of general agriculture). I think that our biggest problem comes in reorienting ourselves and the industry and the University to adequate and proper goals that have a long term good effect. I got involved in organic agriculture because I felt an obligation to leave the land in as good a shape as I found it. We take trouble not to burn our rice straw, try to rotate, try to grow green manure crops--try to maintain this resource for later generations. But at the present time, the way we are being oriented toward efficiency, people can't afford to rotate, to work the straw in, and they must use chemicals to get the price up (since the price is so low). ...

So some of the problems come from consumer unawareness. The consumer has to get more involved...We need a redirection of our goals, a re-education of the consumer, and a teamwork effort to solve the problems.

Summary of Presentation by

Bernard Bricmont*
California Certified Organic Farmers Organization

Mr. Bricmont began by giving some information about his organization. "We have organized in California to certify organic growers, to certify the food that they produce--that it is pesticide free and that the soil management is such that it builds up the soil and that no chemical sprays or fertilizers are used. We are involved in consumer relationships because we have consumer representatives on all of our certification visits; there is also a consumer representative on our board... We will be brand identifying in that there will be a sticker on the product, either on the package or on the crate or lug telling the consumer that this is a certified product, so that people will have some reference as to where the food is coming from."

Some of the areas Mr. Bricmont mentioned his organization would like to see researched are:

1. Plant resistance to insects and diseases;

2. Food values of particular crops--"Is the consumer buying food or is he buying bulk?"

3. Biological control of insects and diseases;

4. Marketing and food handling problems of the small growers--"Everything has been oriented around such large quantities that the small grower can't process his own food, and this is where it is at. If the grower can deliver his product prepared to the market, then he will get his share of the wealth in return."

5. Large scale composting--cooperation with cities to recycle urban wastes;

6. Packaging grades--"These have been based strictly on appearance, not on food value or nutritional value."

7. Consumer interaction with the farmers--"The more the consumer knows, the more they'll demand better products."

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*Mr. Bricmont is the Vice-President of the California Certified Organic Farmers Association, an association of some 56 farms in California. He is an engineer in San Jose and a farmer in Santa Cruz. Due to the illness of F. F. "Cal" Slewing, Mr. Bricmont kindly agreed to speak on very short notice.

Summary of Presentation by

Cliff Humphrey*
Ecology Action Educational Institute

"Society today has a basic interest in its own destruction. Today, we are interested in one part of society, the farm. But we must recognize the relationship of the farm in the context of the larger problems of society...to make sure that we don't find ourselves in a self-contradictory or self-defeating situation as we make plans on into the future."

"The population draw is now outstripping the ability of the earth's resources and the life support system to meet that draw."

"...We shouldn't lose sight of the new patterns of farm labor--whereas we used to have farm hands that lived on the land and were paid annually, you now have contract labor, and so the person who owns the farm wants a minimum amount of hourly contracted labor so there isn't the possibility of doing the fence mending or the soil conservation work that was done during the slow months that we had in the past..."

"The environmental movement, because it is oriented to the cities, has been extremely short sighted not to become involved in the basic issue of soil conservation. Once we stop putting filth in the air, the air will be clean; once we stop silting our rivers and filling them with dissolved solids, they will be clean. But as you all know, once the soil is gone, it is gone; and it takes a long time to build that base back."

According to Mr. Humphrey, perhaps the most basic problem that we face today, both in agriculture and in our society as a whole, is that the decision-making process is one and the same with the capitalization process--"If you can't capitalize it, you can't do it. We are imposing man made institutions that are expedient for us in the short run at the expense of the long term benefits of biological or natural systems..."

"...We have to develop the confidence that we can do social inventing with the same confidence that we can develop new equipment... We need social engineering on the same scale as mechanical and scientific engineering. Of course, it is a political problem--you have the problem of the University becoming involved in the political process--I don't think we can avoid that. I think we have to face this thing head on and apply the resources of the University that comes from the people in society to design the kinds of changes that we must have to survive.

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*Mr. Humphrey has been active in the ecology movement since its inception. He was originally active in Berkeley, but once he got Ecology Action going, he started thinking--"Berkeley is kind of an anomaly because any change program could happen in Berkeley, so we'll go somewhere else for a better test." He picked Modesto and started the Ecology Action Educational Institute.

We must build survival value into culture, and this will be done in a very premeditated and planned manner.

Agriculture's role in this is fundamental. According to Mr. Humphrey, we are now dependent on techniques that are exploitative of the land, the farmer, the farm worker, and the consumer. "Emphasis on efficiency is a trap as we consider a more human oriented form of agriculture and society."

"The dollar success of agriculture allows a familiar succession from the farm to urban expansion, and then a very successful ring of retail establishments and service establishments for the farming community on the periphery of this urban area, urban decay within the center of that urban area as the ring continues to expand out into the farmland and then factories coming in and employing those who are available for a low hourly wage."

Mr. Humphrey now sees this succession going on in the central valley--trucking firms from LA are requesting to move into Modesto. It is cheaper to pave over some of the fringe farmland for the trucking operations than it is to pay the taxes in LA.

So, in the move to decentralize agriculture--to have more small parcels, more owner operated parcels--we must exercise extreme caution or such a policy will result in massive urban sprawl. If we have people in increased numbers moving back to the land with the same expectations of society today, the movement will be a self-defeating one."

Mr. Humphrey then commented on a project entitled "the metabolism approach to environmental research." According to this theory, in agriculture we have to look at the basic relationships between the fertile land where our habitat is, the water, and the energy relationships. And we may have to design new matrices of where people live, how they grow their food, and how they eat. We may have to design new relationships to reach the values and goals we're pursuing without continuing some of the evils our society is trapped in today.

"...We must move ahead with a minimum of indebtedness and a maximum of sharing... And so while we need new forms on the land in terms of new machines, alternative energy sources (such as methane), we also have to learn to make do with a minimum amount of steel per person, a minimum amount of irrigation pipe per acre, a minimum amount of horsepower per acre..."

"...These are the kinds of questions we have to be willing to raise. We have to organize ourselves perhaps into new units to allow the success of smaller production units and maintain a maximum number of acres in production."

Summary of Presentation by

Robert van den Bosch*
Division of Biological Control, UC Berkeley

"I am a survivor...the going has been rough. In response to a recent article I wrote for Organic Gardening, which evoked some of the most horrendous tirades out of some of our farm advisors that I have ever read or witnessed, one farm advisor wrote me that when he had mentioned me to one of his entomologist friends, the response from from the entomologist was, 'If van den Bosch's scientific integrity were to be measured on a scale of 1 - 10, his integrity would have to be measured in ppm.' This is the kind of stuff I'm forced to take and I love it. I've got a retort coming up in Rodale Press--if they publish it in Organic Gardening Magazine, they'll have more guts than I do because the farm advisor pretty well runs down Rodale Press, but the name of the thing is "Bouquets from the Penal Farm."

Dr. van den Bosch went on to say that the original charter of the University of California is what gives it its uniqueness, and it worries him that this charter is being attacked.

The issues that he was concerned about ten years ago at Riverside are just now surfacing as issues for University involvement. "I have referred to the Experiment Stations in the past as craven political places, and I don't back off from that opinion one bit. The agricultural colleges too often submit to the power of groups--the groups with political and economic power."

As an example of this capitaulation to power, Dr. van den Bosch described annual meetings at UC Riverside where representatives of Sunkist came to the campus to see what was going on. Out of one of these meetings, Dr. van den Bosch was ordered (through his department chairman via the dean) to stop the work he was doing and devote full time to working on an aphid that transmits diseases to citrus. His refusal to do this was one of the things that led to his dismissal.

In regard to the recent law passed for licensing pest control advisors, Dr. van den Bosch said that the University got involved when the Council of California Growers, scared because a better law almost got passed, asked the University to write another law better suited to the interests of the Council--another example of the capitulation to the powers that be. It is Dr. van den Bosch's opinion that the present law has set pest control advisors back a long way.

As far as integrated control and biological control are concerned...we are making headway, although there are people constantly harassing us." The Division of Biological Control has suffered the same budget cuts as the rest of the University, so the amount of money they are getting is not all that great.

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*Dr. van den Bosch is an entomologist and Chairman of the Division of Biological Control at UC Berkeley. He has been associated with the pesticide issue, dealing with questions on the politics of pesticides and why insects keep being such a problem despite all of the chemical input; he is also working on a study of alternative pesticides.

Some people say that the research role of the College of Agricultural Sciences should be wiped out, but Dr. van den Bosch feels that the University should have the role of watch dog. In other words, if the University doesn't do agricultural research, we open a vacuum. The University is not fulfilling its role- it has traditionally sided with the powers that be. The University, according to Dr. van den Bosch, should be the fair-minded element in the research affair.

The most crucial change that I can see in the University of California's changing role...is to change its posture. And if this doesn't happen, the agricultural colleges will be shut down, because the public isn't getting much out of them. There is the potential to do a great deal of sociological and ecological good within the framework of the Division of Agricultural Sciences, as well as to increase production efficiency. We need an overall philosophical change in the University."

The University will have to put its money where its mouth is to back these changes financially.

Summary of Presentation by

David Talamante*
El Rancho del Sol

When El Rancho del Sol began five years ago, they started analyzing the kinds of problems farm workers would face ten years after, and how they could solve these problems. After having been involved in several projects, "...we realized that we had to get part of the economic pie in the County." Some of the biggest industries in the Valley were located in Stanislaus County with more coming in and farm workers had few choices--either go on welfare, migrate elsewhere, or fight the Teamsters or large conglomerates--to survive. Thus, much of the energy of El Rancho del Sol was spent trying to survive; there was no time for research. "We haven't had the opportunity to utilize the University of California..."

One of the goals of El Rancho del Sol was to implement a corporation that would serve farm workers and be run by the farm workers. The cooperative started with 350 members--Chicanos, Blacks, Okies. However, later each group decided to organize its own economic base.

Although they had originally planned to begin with 200-300 acres of land, under the advice of Mr. Joe Yonan, a small farmer in Stanislaus County for over 40 years, they decided to start with a smaller plot in order to learn and educate themselves about the problems they would face. Three years ago, with 20 families, they approached the Extension Service of Stanislaus County for assistance and were met negatively. "They said we would never be able to organize ourselves into a farm worker corporation and do what we wanted to do..." Farm workers of El Rancho del Sol were not able to get the necessary information for the Extension Service, however a UC student working in Stanislaus County was able to get assistance from Extension and do some of the necessary research.

They found a plot of land abandoned by the University of California, occupied it, developed it, and then went through the legal channels to acquire the land. They now have it on a lease with an option to buy. But El Rancho del Sol encountered problems. "First, to be able to get the research that we needed done, we had to have hearings; we had to appear before the Senate Subcommittee on Migratory Labor... and we testified to the fact that we just couldn't get any information ...it's strictly the elite that get the research, because of the politics involved. In Stanislaus County, the large growers, conglomerates and industries control the taxpayers' agencies. And we had no base--political or economical. So this gave us more reason to organize. We started reaching out to people who had more contacts and little more political influence than we did. We went before various senators, congressmen, assemblymen, and local legislators to protest and complain about the way we were treated by the Extension Service. It came out in a public debate between the director of the Extension Service and

*David Talamante is the President and one of the founders of El Rancho del Sol, a cooperative farming enterprise comprised of about ten families of farm work background in Keyes, California.

myself in the papers and continued for about three weeks, until finally I got a letter of apology from him because of the Senate Subcommittee hearings. Since then, we've had a good relationship working with them. I'm trying to point out the kind of political pressure it took for us to organize ourselves and show that we also had some political clout in the County."

There were other problems: Last year, everything planted by El Rancho del Sol was organic, but because of the organic process and lack of information, the crops were late and they didn't get the best prices. This year to avoid this, they planted earlier, but as a result got insects, so 1/2 of the crop is organic and 1/2 is not. Mr. Talamante emphasized the fact that information from the Extension Service could have helped to prevent this. But they gained experience.

"If the University of California would work in conjunction with the farm workers and help with research, then the consumer would get the end result of better products, savings, and most important, the concern that the people themselves are getting the best product. But instead, this (information) goes to the power elite, the elite society. And whether we can change this structure or not, I don't know, but we're doing it on our own. We're not waiting for the University to change the structure or to deal with our problems, but it would have helped; what has taken us five years to accomplish could have been done in one with the research you have available here."

"None of this wealth, none of this research has gone out to the people themselves. I don't know whether we can change this, but I do know that it's going to take more than just the people in this room and more than just discussion. There's going to have to be some political muscle, legal action, and the kind of work we're doing." Mr. Talamante stressed the importance of organizing a coalition of small farmers and farm workers and other groups neglected by University research; a coalition of those with practical experience and those with technical knowledge.

According to Mr. Talamante, research alone is not sufficient. We need to ask, "...what kinds of actions can we take to implement the research? .. you have millions of dollars of research...but when you're ready to implement it, the powers that be come down on you. It's going to take more than being in one room and talking about it; we're all going to have to organize...not just the social problems, but we also have to look at the marketing problem. Who controls the markets? Who makes the money? We have to have input on every level of the game in agriculture--from the top to the bottom."

"The University started with being concerned about human beings, but somehow or another got away from it, and now we have to bring it back to the people. And we can do it, but we have to work together to understand the problems that each of us faces and how to deal with them."

Summary of Presentation by

Jerry Kresy*
Consumer Co-op of Berkeley

"...First of all, you do know that the consumer pays all the bills...whether you're wealthy or whether you're poor...whether it goes into University grants, taxes, welfare, tax write-offs--for all of this, the consumer pays the bills. If they don't pay for it in the marketplace, they pay for it in the second way. I'll give you a classic example: take the spray can, made of metal, you can't use the damn thing--all you can do is put it on the sehlf. You're going to pay that price too. You also pay much of the agricultural prices, and you also pay for smog, air or water pollution... Cheapness is not the value; much of the time we think how can we get it cheaper... We pay the secondary prices, the prices that ecology groups have to try to go around and clean up--plastic and cans and glass and so forth...

Mr. Kresy explained that the idea that large supermarkets are the most efficient ways to distribute food is not true. "Many people who work in food conspiracies know that you can get food much cheaper than in any supermarket."

He went on to say that the consumers in the Bay Area have advantages over people in Sacramento or Modesto. "You're subsidizing us; you're paying more for the same products than we're paying in the Bay Area, and this doesn't involve the price differential or that the crop may be closer to you. You're subsidizing us because at this time, Lucksafe is in the process of attempting to squeeze out of the marketing business the small independent chains and independent grocery stores. The way they're doing it is a differential pricing structure... Safeway has different prices in different areas for the same product."

"...Differential pricing is a way to make it impossible for marketing co-ops to have a marketing situation where you're going to have a fair deal." Mr. Kresy explained that even a large co-op like that in Berkeley cannot compete with Safeway because Safeway is big enough that they can maintain low prices in the Bay Area and make up for it in other areas.

"...Food conspiracies...aren't changing agribusiness; it isn't changing the political structure; what it is essentially saying is, 'I can do better for myself if you and I work together.' You get into buying clubs, and the same kinds of things are in operation. But if you get into urban co-ops, you can begin to educate people...you can take a little piece of the dollar...and use it for educational purposes or maybe even for legislation. You can support other co-ops and farm groups (Berkeley co-op uses only UFW lettuce). ...You can do this stuff if you're big enough; it doesn't matter what you do if you are small. In the beginning you have to be small to learn and grow, but if your goal is to take care of yourself...that's all you'll take care of.

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*Mr. Kresy represents the Consumer Co-op of Berkeley, an alternative marketing enterprise of supermarkets, service stations, garages, organic food stores; he is particularly instrumental in working with member participation, member control, and member education.

Summary of Presentation by

Sheldon Greene*
Center for Rural Studies

Mr. Greene began his presentation by describing the enormity of the task involved in attempting to change an institution like the University of California. He then talked about some of the "predicaments" in rural American for which the University can be held responsible.

"...the University has been very successful in encouraging productivity in agriculture...this productivity has had a technological and research component which has led to capital intensivity versus labor intensivity in California, and to a great extent, American agriculture. The impact of this, combined with other forces--government policies, tax policies--have led to the loss of family farming. To jump over California...to New Jersey, which is known in the East as the Garden State, which supplies this great urban megalopolis with a lot of its vegetables...in the 20 years between 1950 and 1970, New Jersey has lost 2/3 of its family farmers, and 1/3 of its farm land due to a variety of factors. This, despite the emphasis on productivity and capital intensivity or perhaps as a result of these factors, which are, to a large extent, the output of this and similar land grant institutions. The alternative to the productivity is that we've suffered as consumers from the poor quality of merchandise provided from the greater emphasis on the appearance of it, rather than the nutritional value of it. And we've also sustained an ironic, but inevitable, increase in cost for this food which has less quality, much of the cost attributable to the secondary questions of distribution of merchandising...

"...the attrition of the family farmer and with that a concomitant attrition of independent businessmen in the small communities who have had this symbiotic relationship with the family farmers in the outlying regions, and along with this, the loss of the farm worker's mean income--his miserable income because he's been displaced by the farm machinery and the lack of an alternative in the rural economy for him... and with this has come a concentration of ownership of land in rural America...by absentee conglomerates. And along with this concentration has been tax loss farming and ownership of land by any number of syndicates that are non-agriculturally based... And along with this has come the concept of vertical integration of corporations which are not only farming, but doing the marketing, with the monopolistic considerations, the concentration of the market in the hands of the few, the inevitable increase in price which comes with oligopoly and monopoly. And with that has come environmental degradation...the depletion of single resources, the degradation of the soil, the exhaustion of it with nitrates, pesticides and water as well. And for all of this, a continual poor return on the invest of the farmer, the farmer's capital investment, so his benefit by and large has not been commensurate with the increase in productivity. He's driven to have a larger and larger farm to make a decent return for himself because he needs

*Sheldon Greene is the founder of the Center for Rural Studies in San Francisco and one of the directors of the National Coalition for Land Reform.

more acreage and more production... And finally, the bureaucratization of marketing, extensive controls on how you package, the appearance of things, just make it harder for the small man..."

"What can we do? Several of us in this room had a series of meetings and developed some fairly detailed recommendations, which one day...we'll present to the Board of Regents and inevitably to the legislature. ...We do need to make the University accountable for its research to the same extent that any new plant today has got to account to the public...to show that it is in the public interest and will not harm the public before it can be built. We also need to have the University consider the secondary considerations, secondary attributes of research and to weigh those costs, social and economic costs, before engaging in research. ...Certainly, we have to make the University concentrate much more than a token response on elevating that segment of the rural society which has been so abused by the productivity emphasis of the past several decades--that, of course, is the family farmer, the farm worker, other people who are dependent on the farm economy in the rural areas, including the urban consumer."

"...Perhaps viewing our relationship to the University in a vacuum is somewhat quixotic, because really, the lesson of the University's orientation toward the agribusiness interests...reflects that there's much more than just our common interest, our common concern, our formulation of intelligent recommendations that's at stake. ... Obviously, what's needed is one or more vehicles of political power which is based upon a broad popular coalition...of people who can get together and recognize that their common needs are in a certain vein and articulate these in a concrete way, and then structure an organization in such a way that they can make their interests known to the existing political leaders, and to new people that they might elect, who are as beholden to that constituency as many of the other political leaders are beholden to our adversaries today. The idea with which we should all probably go away from this conference is the importance of political power if there's to be any meaningful change in the present power relationships in rural California and rural America. And this requires an economic base, not just an organizational base... Obviously the economic base that agribusiness has legitimizes their claims with the University, with the politicians, and also gives them the money, the tax contributions to say, 'we have a right to special legislation, or legislation which reflects our interests to the exclusion of other people....'"

Workshop on

ALTERNATIVES TO THE AGRIBUSINESS METHOD OF FARMING

Summarized by Henry Esbenshade

The workshop began with a discussion on the methods of organic agriculture. It was pointed out that agribusiness owned the best lands, while only the less minerally rich soils were available to the small farmers. This led to the question of soil nutrition, crop rotations, and green manures plus composting. There was doubt expressed over the feasibility of the process of changing a farm from chemical to organic. There is much back yard experience with gardens, but very little is known about the larger operations.

Wendell Lundberg of the National Farmers Organization and an organic rice farmer, spoke of his 3,000-acre farm, and how little support he was given in dealing with crop problems by the University. The concensus of all present was that UC Extension has little conception of what organic farmers are doing. Mr. Lundberg's farm is successful and points optimistically to the feasibility of such farming, but he is well aware of the problems which other farmers around him are facing. He feels strongly that the public is not hearing the voice of the real farmer today, and only through a cooperative effort can needed information be made available.

Bernard Bricmont of California Certified Organic Farmers supported this discussion with accounts of farmers whom he is certifying. Many questions were raised concerning this process of certification, and it was pointed out that the UC system surely must be able to assist in the determination of the factors which influence the organic content of soils. Farmers want to learn what they can from those who have the research facilities.

Discussion moved into the tax question as somebody brought out the questionable economics of the small farming operations in the state. In response, Dr. Paul S. Taylor, Professor of Economics at UC Berkeley, discussed the reforms of the New Deal, reforms which the people did not support, and as a result, failed. The "machinery" closed down due to lack of knowledge in the community. "It is proper to speak of the responsibility of UC, but also the role of the people must be considered."

David Talamante of El Rancho del Sol spoke of his efforts to organize the small farmers, and the establishment of a farm worker's lobby in Washington with hopes for the establishment of a bank for loans to small farming operations. Others actively joined in the discussion of how to go about organizing political action, with the conclusion being that an organization was certainly needed to take into account the wide variety of problems all of them faced. It was suggested that a series of similar conferences of farmers be held to organize and define in detail the problem areas which could be dealt with. A long discussion ensued on the strategies of power, the history of reforms (for the people or for the government?). Who can we go to in the UC system to research a problem? An alternative to agribusiness is power. Small farming is poor business today.

In the course of this discussion, Dr. John Madison of the Department of Environmental Horticulture spoke of a friend in the Midwest who organized a number of his neighbors and their friends to actively pursue lowering their production costs by implementing organic principles, technological exchanges, and cooperation. He pointed out that four calories of fossil fuels are needed to produce one calorie of food, which is hardly efficient in comparison to the work undertaken in implementing other forms of energy in the production of organic foods. Efficiency should not be monetary, but instead, measured by the people producing on the land. It can be done most efficiently if we begin to use our resources

Mr. Bricmont spoke of the urgency in marketing foods directly from the farmer, thus eliminating the middlemen (brokers, etc.), who cater to the large supermarkets, finding loopholes and getting around the marketing organizations in power. The University must understand the parameters of the problem--an analysis of the system and an alternative direction for the small farmers was called for. There was interest in the alternative marketing system currently in operation in Europe called Demeter, which is the arm of the Bio-Dynamic farming system in those countries. The work of Dr. Pfeiffer in this field was mentioned along with names of other Europeans who had spent many years in the early part of this century attempting to deal with the approaching chemical revolution.

Mr. Lundberg spoke of the catfish he raised, and how they were sold to the public with no inspection of their toxicity, irrespective of the chemicals which could have been applied to regions surrounding the ponds, or the actual nutrients consumed by these fish. The overall reaction was a demand for greater research into the meaning of quality foods versus the chemically fertilized production orientation today--the health of the people and of the soils which produce for them. There must be a medium of communication between such farmers who are truly concerned with these problems, but who do not fit into the backyard Rodale Organic Gardening programs as they exist at present. Once again, the need for research into farming organically was emphasized.

Dr. Robert van den Bosch of the Division of Biological Control, UC Berkeley, spoke of the work of the Biological Control laboratories in Albany. Although he did not feel that this work directly benefited small farmers or organic farmers, he did feel that they could utilize the resources by organizing and presenting inputs for research into the problems which faced them. Dr. van den Bosch mentioned that the funds for the work of the laboratories are severely limited by the State, and also by the large cotton and alfalfa lobby groups who have the capital to support research for their interest groups. Much work has been done, and he saw no reason why integrated control systems could not be worked out for a wide variety of crops. Once again the question of organizing small farmers and organic people to lobby for their interests in UC research came up. The big growers of alfalfa, cotton and deciduous fruit have been very active in supporting this research. Dr. van den Bosch did not believe that they were importing totally new ideas in farming, but that their principle concern was to maximize the benefits of the inputs which the farmer

could supply in terms of his soil management and such other interrelated factors. He estimates that integrated control would reduce by 75% the pesticide costs in cotton, and he held similar predictions for alfalfa and deciduous fruits, including citrus--which all means savings to the farmer and consumer. Yet communication of this knowledge to the farmers was exceptionally difficult due to the harassment of fund cut-backs, and the great domination of agribusiness pesticide salesmen who cost the public some $25 million a year to advertise their products. He supported the work of the certified organic farming movement, and felt that it was a step towards a greater understanding of the parameters of problems today. Perhaps we can one day reach this pesticide free environment ideal which they profess... perhaps an insurance program against pesticides or subsidies for non-chemical usage." He did not feel that reduction in our pesticide use would cut back the food production as drastically as some Farm Bureau members think.

It was the concensus of the members of the workshop that there is a great need for cooperation to provide inputs into this area of research, especially the economics of such an alternative to chemical agriculture, and the need to integrate competent people within the University to efficiently use the resources which are available for research. UC could provide services which the public needs, but the information is not getting out.

Again, members of the workshop voiced their interest in the formation of a political lobby, as farm advisors were not adequately sharing the knowledge of the University with the public. Only through pressure could El Rancho del Sol succeed in getting a farm advisor to assist them. It was felt that the UC farm advisors were unable to deal with the diversity of problems confronting the group, and for that reason, several private groups have begun consultation--Rincon Vitova Insectaries and the Association of Applied Insect Ecologists were cited. Dr. van den Bosch felt that any other groups had better be checked through his offices before they could be trusted in pest control. Organic farming is considered a challenge to the establishment, as a threat to free enterprise and a conspiracy of the eco-freaks against the vested interests of chemical industries which allow for the safe production of foods in California!

So ended the workshop. Small farmers, organic farmers, farm worker co-ops, and a big rice grower shared similar concerns that this issue of the research responsibilities of the UC system be defined and directed to support their interests in survival. It is a good beginning.

Workshop on

ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Summarized by Jon Hammond

The first topic of discussion in this workshop was methane production. Cliff Humphrey of the Ecology Action Educational Institute said that urban methane generation could help supply the needs of counties presently on a gas ration. While all public works projects are in jeapardy, at the same time, tons of leaves that could be converted into methane are being buried. The replacement of gas with methane will not come overnight. Because digested sludge must be dried before it is put back on the land, it was suggested that composting might be a better method of producing a soil conditioner.

In regard to energy conservation, the following question arose: Which has the most effect on soil structure, (1) using organic matter on the soil to feed soil organisms to restructure the soil, or (2) using organic matter for methane production to fuel tractors to turn the soil? As no one present knew the answer, Cliff Humphrey felt it was the type of research the College of Agriculture should direct its attention to. This is especially important in view of the present energy crisis.

Professor Robert van den Bosch of the Division of Biological Control, UC Berkeley, stated: "We should begin building a backlog of techniques that do not require large energy inputs if the species is to survive. The government should support the research of organic gardeners instead of working solely on how to grow a more efficient rutabaga."

The next topic of discussion was solar energy. Jon Hammond of the Department of Environmental Horticulture observed that it is ironic that peak energy use comes during the summer even though we have very cool nights. Unfortunately, our style of architecture is not suited to this climate. People are so accustomed to air conditioning that they don't even close their drapes when the sun is shining in the window. Many people have lost contact with the realities of the environment that surrounds them.

Somebody asked whether solar energy can be used for cooling systems in the summer. According to Pran Vohra, there have been several attempts to do this, including one utilizing salts that melt when warmed, and then release the heat when they recrystalize.

Another system concerns storing heat. Jon Hammond told of staying in a house in New Mexico that used 55-gallon drums full of water to store heat. The south wall of the house was made of glass with a movable panel for insulation outside. Inside, the wall was lined with barrels of water. During the day, the panel was lifted to allow the sun to heat the barrels, and at night, the panel was pulled over the glass wall to protect the heat from re-radiating outward. This system can work in reverse during the summer.

The third topic of discussion concerned the use of insurance to supplant pesticides. According to Dr. van den Bosch, only about 15% of the crops are threatened by insects. If we insure the farmer for the full value of his crop against loss to insects, the farmer won't have to spray since spraying is only a form of insurance anyway. This approach can both save the farmer money and protect the environment. However, it is difficult to get the farm advisors to accept new ideas such as this. There is also a big problem with pesticide salesmen convincing the farm advisors to use unnecessary pesticides.

Discussion moved toward the University, and it was agreed that the University must modify the direction of its research to meet the new demands placed on it by society. Victor P. Osterli, Program Leader, Agricultural Extension Service, stated that the College is changing and attacking environmental problems. For example, they are working with the California Department of Water Resources to develop a comprehensive state-wide water plan.

Jim Vlamis of the Department of Soils and Plant Nutrition, UC Berkeley, explained that the University originally started out fulfilling the mandate of the Morrill Act to "serve the people." In the 1860's, one-half of the population consisted of small farmers. The University began changing after World War II when the incorporation of California farming started accelerating, and agriculture was shifting in the direction of agribusiness. Big farms gave money for research; the small farmers did not.

But now, other segments of the population are developing their own power. An example of the coming change is some new courses being given--one is called "Urban Garden Ecosystems." It is at the opposite end from agribusiness. The students are interested in it in terms of getting out of the rat race and they get an integrated way of doing things--growing their own food without chemicals, etc.

It may be that as we enter a period of energy scarcity, the small farmers may be able to produce cheaper food. The pesticide and energy crises seem to go against the corporate farmers.

Workshop on

PATHS OUT OF POVERTY

Summarized by Geoff Allen

The members of this workshop were mostly from universities and public agencies. They were therefore well placed to determine what actions the University could realistically undertake. Conspicuously absent were the farm workers. However, the workshop members had heard the letter from Jim Horgan, Research Director for the United Farm Workers, which eloquently expressed that group's position, and much of the workshop discussion developed from the main points in that letter.

This workshop, then, concentrated on the most significant identifiable group--farm workers--while recognizing that there were also other neglected rural groups; e.g., small farmers. We concentrated on the most visible part of the problem--technology--especially the impact of mechanization.

Discussion led the group to the position that we must accept the fact that we live in a technologically based society, that the clock cannot be put back, and that technical changes, although controllable, will continue to occur whatever action the University does or does not take. Most of the changes we regard as "progress" have come about through research in industry, rather than in the University, and this situation will likely continue. However, some discussants felt that much more control of both the rate and direction of technical change than presently exists was possible and desirable.

Taking a historical perspective, the group believed that 50 to 75 years ago, the Agricultural Experiment Station was fulfilling the role anticipated by the sponsors of the Hatch Act: it was providing service to most of the people, since the rural population comprised a large part of the total.

What was realized by the workshop participants was that the claim of imprtiality in University research is a myth, but a myth still believed by many researchers, and one which needs to be demolished if a redirection of the work of the Agricultural Experiment Station is to occur.

The group concluded that the rate and direction of technological progress was relatively immune from the actions of the University, but that as a publicly supported institution, the University did not appear to be meeting its responsibilities of serving all the people. Such responsibility requires resolving conflicts between the needs of conflicting groups and establishing what constitutes desirable distributions of wealth between these groups--both difficult judgmental problems.

Accepting that technical change will result in continual displacement of workers with low productivity, the workshop moved to the next problem: what to do for the half million people in California who will not be needed on the agricultural work force--most of them

farm workers (rather than small farmers). Under present conditions, they must either migrate out of the countryside often merely transporting the problem, or exist on welfare.

This problem was discussed in two parts:

1. How can the University aid the workers left behind in agriculture?

2. How can the University help the people being pushed out?

Aid for workers left behind. For farm workers to be successful in their fight for increased wages and other benefits, they need to organize. This was forcefully stated and readily recognized. Workers need both economic and political power. What the University has is knowledge, which can be used to create principally political power.

One question was--How much can the University assist in unionization since this is not considered a typical University activity?" However, to the surprise of many, it was pointed out that we have a model from an earlier period--the University's role in setting up the Farm Bureaus. These were designed to organize farmers into groups so that the University could communicate with them. There seems to be no reason why the University should not communicate with and serve farm worker groups.

Some discussion developed on the possibilities for a stable work force. On a given farm, this would require designing a mix of crops and techniques which would require the same amount of labor throughout the year. As a longer term solution to the problems of migration and seasonal labor requirements, it appeared ideal. Clearly it is a neglected area of research. And at present there is no incentive for a grower to adopt such a scheme aside from the desirability to have a regular group of workers to turn to. Legislation would be needed to create variable taxes or wage rates depending on whether the employment period was by the day, week, month, or year.

At this point, we asked whether the existing agricultural extension service could be modified to serve both workers and growers. It was recognized that the extension service had done well in reaching a particular segment of agriculture, and that the thinking of extension agents was currently geared along these lines. To ask these agents to serve farm workers would be asking them to serve groups with conflicting interests, and the workshop felt that the only solution would be to set up a parallel arm of the extension service. On the other hand, there seemed to be no great problem in getting extension agents to serve cooperatives of former farm workers (discussed below). These were not seen to be in conflict with other growers.

Help for people being pushed out. Unionization can also assist workers being displaced, although this specific topic was not considered. There was some discussion on whether unionization promotes mechanization or vice versa, with the general opinion being that mechanization was occurring and unionization was a reaction to it.

One route for displaced workers has been the cooperative or communes. La Cooperativa Campesina was cited as an example. Those in the group familiar with this concept regarded it as a short term approach. At present, it appears to be the only answer to lack of planning for redevelopment at the national or regional levels. We heard of the approach of several European countries towards planning on a national scale so that new factory locations would be in areas of local unemployment.

The workshop participants concluded that the single most effective action the University could take was what is termed a "social impact statement." Thus, in the same way that companies are required to file environmental impact statements before they undertake any new building, workers in the agricultural experiment station would be required to file a social impact statement before they started a new research project. It was not thought that these would be any more accurate than environmental impact statements. However, by specifying which groups of people must be considered and what possible outcomes must be evaluated, the requirement of a social impact statement would exert considerable influence on the thinking of all of the researchers in the agricultural experiment station. And that is the only way in which it will change.

Workshop on

ALTERNATIVE MARKETS AND CONSUMER NEEDS

Summarized by Marshall Hunt

To the benefit of this workshop, there were representatives of all sides of the question who approached the sessions with a healthy combination of a desire to cooperate with others to explore new areas of activity, while at the same time keeping in mind for themselves and the group what the needs of their respective groups are.

The most important outgrowth of this workshop was the idea of an Office of Alternative Markets Information. The seed from which the idea grew was the information from Floyd Allen of California Certified Organic Farmers regarding a similar office which was set in Pennsylvania. Howard Schutz's (Department of Consumer Sciences) description of the University's problem with the communication of the wealth of information that currently exists in the UC system made the discussion substantive in nature.

Given the present situation that people who have been outside the University's mainstream of research do not have the contacts necessary to get the information that they need and is available, and given the fact that for a variety of reasons (for example, the fact that professors do not get credit in the review process for publications in the Extension Bulletin) that information of a problem-solving nature is not published, the charge of the newly created Office of Information would be to gather from the sources at hand the information requested by individuals. This would require a stable budget to hire a director, clerks, liaison people, and persons who could communicate with academicians, farmers, consumers, etc. It would be appropriate that the Office be funded by the University through its Cooperative Extension Service so long as it does not become captive to the present special interest grower groups or the interests of agribusiness.

There was some disagreement about the Office's position with respect to redirecting University research. Roger Hillyard of The Well, an alternative marketing concern, expressed concern that research would be used as an excuse for non-action. Marshall Hunt of the Davis Environmental Council held that the Office by reason of its intimate contact with a new constituency would be in an excellent position to know what research was needed and thus should be in the position to act, not just advise and recommend to some higher authority. After more discussion, it was noted that the apparent disagreement was one of timing, and it was agreed that for the first two years, the Office's major task would be coordinating the existing information.

The conference program listed five topics of interest in the Alternative Markets area. The facilitator surveyed those in attendance and the topic 'markets for non-agribusiness produce' was one which drew the most response. It was recognized that a thorough discussion of this topic would necessarily lead the group into the other topics listed. The definition of 'agribusiness' was debated with the

concensus being that size alone did not mean anything, but rather it is whether or not the farming operation itself is owned by those other than the farmer or farmers themselves. This definition was not held to be complete, but rather it settled the issue that the size of the operation is not as important as who owns and operates it. It was a matter of emphasis that a good deal of the concern of the group was about the small producer who must sell everything he produces at the best price in order to survive.

Roger Hillyard brought up a case where a grower could have used the assistance of the Extension Service in learning how to grow a crop organically. Floyd Allen of California Certified Organic Farmers was very interested in the problems of small organic farmers with packaging, so that the crop will be accepted on the market and sell at a healthy rate. The problem of the small guy knowing what the consumer prefers at a particular moment in time is an area of research the University could puruse. There are various systems vailable and in development for packaging and preserving produce as it is picked, but their scale is always that which only the huge agribusiness operations can afford.

A hot issue that came up throughout the day was that of legalized waste and ordered shortages of produce by the various crop allotment boards and agricultural codes. Later, it became apparent that one of the areas of concern of the proposed Office would have to be the interpretation and revision as necessary of the complex and confusing agricultural codes. Those of the group with experience in these matters thought that if the people of the state only knew what was happening, they would push for change because it is the consumer, as always, who pays for this unnecessary waste of good food. It was noted that the present confusion works to give those who could afford an attorney a big advantage. Also the packing, canning and processing companies sometimes use their interpretation of the codes to the detriment of the farmer who is delivering his goods. Just before the lunch break, there was a general feeling that if possible, someone from the law school should be at the meeting. This possibility was checked out but without success.

The concept that the more direct the path food took on its way to the consumer was explored from the ground up. The problems of road side stands, mail orders, and farmers' markets were discussed. Steve Busch of the Owens Valley Indian Co-op felt that there was room here for real improvement, while Jerry Kresy of the Consumer Co-op of Berkeley wanted to deal with issues that would affect the broad masses of consumers. It was agreed that the proposed Office of Information would serve in this area to help farmers to find a number of market outlets so that they could maximize their returns, and so that the consumer would benefit from fresher foods that could be cheaper if waste was stopped.

This discussion of marketing lead to the realization that while the giants can afford to do extensive research into consumer preferences and work to streamline marketing to their advantage, the smaller guys do not have this information, and thus are at a competitive disadvantage. It was thought that the University and the Information

Office could aid in closing this unfair competitive gap. The education of consumers about the crop seasons, the u[illegible]cessary waste, and ways that they could increase the power of their dollar could be done by the University and would help the smaller operators.

The sessions closed with the participants cautiously hopeful. It was recognized that everyone stood to gain by cooperating so as to, in effect, vertically integrate the food supply process to the benefit of the consumer, and not to the increase of profit for some giant agribusiness corporation as is now done.

Workshop on

THE ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF FARMING

Summarized by Bill Kopper

At the beginning of the workshop, W. G. Davis of the Department of Anthropology commented that it was necessary to identify the factors which contributed to the decision about what research should be conducted and on what level it should be funded. Bill Kopper of the Small Farm Project (UCD) pointed out that this was one of the functions of the social implications of research project being conducted by Isao Fujimoto et al. David Hansen of the Department of Agricultural Economics and other members of the workshop agreed that most research in the past had been oriented toward production agriculture, and that funds were made available for this type of research while socially oriented research was discouraged. The groups expressed the need for a summary of the independent research being done by faculty on rural problems, and for further research in the area. Sheldon Greene of the Center for Rural Studies cited an example of this type of research--the study completed by a group of land grant colleges in the Midwest on the impact of farm size on rural life. Although Mr. Greene could not remember the reference, he felt that the recommendations in this document were excellent.

Mr. Greene continued to say that the Davis campus was the preeminent agricultural school in the country, and of all popularly based schools, this should be the first to look into what is going on in Rural America. Instead, nothing has happened in Davis, and all of the concern for these problems has been developing in the Midwest. "If anything, this school has attempted to hush up the problems of Rural America, just as the whole state has attempted to ignore rural and environmental problems until very recently." If anybody got in the way of the march toward more mechanized, more efficient, more exploitative farms, they just got silenced. Goldschmidt was silenced after publishing his 1947 study of Arvin and Dinuba which demonstrated the delapidation of communities surrounded by large farms, opposed to those surrounded by small farms. Professor Rudd was cited as another example of a controversial viewpoint being suppressed. Professor Rudd published a book about the dangers of pesticides several years prior to Rachel Carson's Silent Spring. He could not get it published anywhere in California, and finally found the University of Wisconsin Press in Madison willing to print his work. After the publication of his book, he was bitterly attacked and did not receive the promotions that were due to him. Mr. Greene concluded that this was an example of what happened to faculty members in the University who took controversial positions.

Stephanie Pincetl of the Davis Food Co-op raised the question of the effectiveness of the different studies conducted by Goldschmidt and other scholars. She wondered if these studies ever have any application or whether they are just filed away on a shelf or in a journal that no one ever reads. Mr. Greene pointed out that studies such as Goldschmidt's work or information on consumer items and environmental problems is enormously useful to consumer organizations

or public interest law firms who are pressing for certain types of legislation or change in society. Most of these groups do not have the funding to conduct the research on their own and are forced to rely on the work done by universities or similar institutions. In addition to these comments, W. G. Davis pointed out that there needs to be a re-thinking of the research programs that most of the faculty are doing, and he added that it was always a problem to get new research or new types of research going and to secure the money for the research. Mr. Davis felt that it was a tragedy that there was no money to do research on Rural America, but this country has money for similar research on Ethiopia. He stated, "We know more about Rural Ethiopia than about Rural America." He suggested that we define the constituency for rural research in this country and find out what type of work is necessary.

Chuck Irby of Black Studies cautioned the group not to overestimate the power of the University. He pointed out that a great deal of research can be done with no money or little money. Citing Yolo County as an example, he said that much research has been done in Yolo County by a number of different groups around the University. None of this work has been synthesized and very little of it is used for any purpose. Mr. Irby suggested that we get together all the people on campus who have done research on Yolo County and lay it out. By viewing the cumulative data on the County, it might be possible to see patterns and formulate worthwhile rural programs. He added that most of the research on Yolo County had been done very cheaply by students and staff. Bill Kopper cited the Small Farm Project at UCD as an example of the "inexpensive" research that has been done in the County.

Midway through the afternoon, the discussion began to focus on the Extension Service and the various segments of the public which it serves. Bill Kopper related his impression of how the Extension Service agents have a different type of life than they had in the past. It might be considered a softer life in the respect that the agents make fewer farm calls than they did in the past. The average Extension Service agent is now a specialist who spends half of his time doing research; he has little experience with actual farm management practices. It is difficult to assess whether he is being listened to more or less than in the past. Sheldon Greene pointed out that farm workers cannot get information at all from the Extension Service. He claimed that the organization had evolved to the point where it served the economic interests of the large farmers and corporate farmers. It was another example of the subsidies that the taxpayers provide to the large growers.

The discussion on the role of the Extension Service agent emanated a number of recommendations on the changes which should be made in the agency itself and associated agencies:

1. Provide economic advice to farm workers about their taxes and how much they should get paid for certain types of work. This information could be transmitted though the children from special instruction programs.

2. Extension service should assist farm workers and small farmers in developing co-ops which would allow for greater economic stability of the individuals involved.

3. The Extension Service should emphasize farm management and should develop cost information and other types of information which is of maximum utility to the small grower.

4. Through the 4-H and other educational programs, the Extension Service should develop programs which assist farm worker children and emphasize the advantages of rural living.

There was general criticism of the information from the Extension Service, which only emphasized increased production and nothing of the social aspects of rural living. In addition, it was felt that most of the techniques suggested would only help farmers already large enough to obtain large capital loans.

Much of the discussion of the afternoon session centered on the role of the University and how it creates attitudes in its students and the public. It was felt that the University should take the position that it is dedicated to keeping people on the farm and it should outline a policy to achieve this. Several approaches were suggested to achieve this end. One was to gear the curriculum, research projects and papers to concentrate on the amenities of rural life. Another approach was to start a rural information office which would provide people with information about rural living and how to solve certain farm problems and farm worker problems. Bill Kopper suggested that perhaps one way to increase the University's responsiveness to these problems would be to start a student chapter of the National Coalition for Land Reform, and ask the University to provide the funding. Sheldon Greene and Joe Plagenza of the Western Dairymen's Association commented that the professors were going to have to put their heads on the block. Currently, professors don't even come out of their turtle shells because they have seen too many of their members have their heads cut off with no one coming to their defense.

Presently, the University is not even suggesting that living on the land is a good idea--it will encourage the subsidy of 3,000-acre developments, but will not subsidize ten acres. Chuck Irby commented that he would be willing to give up the urban amenities for a chance to live on the land and farm. But he stated that this opportunity was not even open to him because of the large capitalization necessary to get into farming. This discussion led to an exchange on the philosophy of urban versus rural life. It was pointed out that the University only stresses an urban ethic and there are no positive features attached to a rural life style in any of the University's courses or research. Most of the workshop members agreed that there is a need for the University to begin discussing the advantages of a rural life style and at least give it some status within the University's catalogue of biases.

Comments from University Officials

Magnar Ronning
Associate Dean
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

It has been a real pleasure for me to participate in the conference today, but I do feel that to pose as an official of the University as indicated on the program may be somewhat presumptuous on my part. As indicated on the program, Dean Nielsen was to have appeared, but a conflict developed in his schedule in that he needed to attend an important meeting of the committee of consultants dealing with soil and water quality. With your permission, I will make my comments as a faculty member of the University with some experience in administrative matters gained while serving for five years as Chairman of the Department of Animal Science. The comments I will make will be without much preparation and will largely be in response to some of the discussions and comments that I have heard during the conference today.

The University of California is many things to many people, and to any one individual probably is largely related to one's personal experience and contact with the institution. We can all agree, I am sure, that it is large, and like all big things, it becomes susceptible to unresponsiveness--something like a kick in the tail of a dinosaur may involve some delay before there is a response while the message is being conveyed to its brain. Therefore, an individual faculty member, like myself, with whom the public frequently communicates --being but a small cog in a huge piece of machinery--may not be able to elicit a University response as quickly as might be desired. The University also is costly as is immediately clear when one views the overall budget which is public information. The concept that some may have, however, that the University is the source of unlimited resources is a myth at the individual faculty member's level. I feel, therefore, that Mr. Lundgren in his comments made a very telling point when he referred to grants which support research; the source of funds might indeed be a force which could influence the kinds of things which are done. Let me use my own experience in the Department of Animal Science as an example.

Activities in the Department of Animal Science are in reality animal biology directed at food production and land use. Resource allocations from normal state and federal public funds are largely used up in fixed and overhead expenses, such as salaries and facilities support, with very little spendable operational monies. Therefore, it is necessary to seek extramural funds for the majority of research activities. In seeking and accepting extramural support, both as individuals and as a department, we have firm guidelines that such support must be without strings attached, such that scientifically sound research in animal biology and production principles can be pursued. Surely other individual investigators and units in the University have similar guidelines; therefore, I wonder to what extent in fact the so-called agribusiness influences research activities at the University. In the Department of Animal Science, with which I have been associated, we have had little experience with agribusiness support. Rather, most of our extramural support has been from

institutions such as the National Institutes of Health, which because they are medically and health-oriented in their objectives, may have involved some prostitution, but hopefully in a benevolent manner in the interest of pursuing animal biology studies. I think there is evidence for this in the fact that as the resources of the National Institutes of Health have become more restricted their granting of research support has also become more restrictive toward more specific health-related subjects or very basic animal biology pursuits, fundamental to the solution of medical and health problems.

I heard two other comments during the day which are significant in this respect. As animal scientists, we perceive that animal agriculture is an integral part of land use, especially as applies to some thirty million acres of marginal land in California commands high priority. We have had difficulty in finding support for that type of research. I was interested therefore in Sheldon Greene's comments when he suggested that there are many sources of federal monies available for these kinds of activities. Certainly as an individual investigator, and as a department chairman, we need all kinds of help to identify and to access such sources of funds. The other comment that I thought was significant was that of Dave Talamante when he suggested that people with common interests need to form associations which have as an objective activities to help mount support for that which needs to be done.

Mr. Humphrey's statement, "society's vested interest in its own destruction," brought to mind some problems of society which for a trained and practicing biological scientist, are a source of a great deal of frustration because it is difficult to see how within our biological discipline we can contribute to solutions. With your indulgence, I will divest myself of a couple of these frustrations by way of example. I have worked with small dairy farmers, especially in Oklahoma, and with substantial success in improving the efficiency of their operations. Later, it was frustrating to them as well as to me when their businesses folded being caught in an economic squeeze which neither of us felt we had contributed to. Another frustration relates to Mr. Bricmont's reference to packaging which frequently places more emphasis on appearance than on quality. It has been frustrating to me to have been involved in the development of techniques for the production of high quality nutritious meat, then to find it won't enter the market competitively because consumers seem to prefer to select some beautifully packaged pre-cooked ready-to-serve convenience product which per unit of nutrition may be twice the price of the fresh meat. I agree with Mr. Kresy's statement that it is that way, that it is their choice. I am pleased in this respect that in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences there is concern for effective consumer education; there are activities in this area, and there is a major effort being made to strengthen and increase activities in consumer education and research.

Most of the problems I have heard discussed today can be solved only through entrepreneurship and/or community action. The University's role is in contributing necessary information through its residential and extension teaching programs and developing new information as needed through research. In this respect, I was very interested in Dave Talamante's discussion of the El Rancho del Sol

project. I was disturbed, of course, to hear of the hassle involved in getting the attention of the Agricultural Extension Service; however, I was encouraged to hear that Dave and his group approached extension and hung in vigorously until they got the attention, and gratified to hear that they now are getting service from extension.

Agricultural Extension representatives will comment on their activities later. I wish to mention briefly instruction in the College. I am pleased to report that in recent years, there have been some significant changes in the College teaching programs, to open them up to broader participation by all students on campus and to direct attention to public relevancy. More emphasis has been directed to social and behavioral matters even in technical areas, such as Animal Science, Plant Science, and Soil and Water Science, course offerings have been introduced to offer students a broad view of resource utilization and management, and accompanying environmental and social implications. I have been pleased personally to see in my own class, Domestic Animals and Man, increasing numbers of students not majoring in Animal Science, but in Economics, Political Science, Social Sciences, etc. This expanded contact pleases me for the increased probability of enlightenment of future policy makers with respect to problems of resource management in food production and distribution processes.

Toward improvement of the processes by which the University can contribute to the solution of problems such as have been discussed today, I believe the major area to be strengthened is communication. For example, to stop the machine, I feel cannot be an acceptable solution. When man shaped his first stone tool and found that this gave him an advantage in coping with his environment, I believe he became irreversibly committed to technological development. In my personal experience, I look back to the beet harvester; I worked in the beet fields and topped beets with a machete-like instrument to which scars on my hands bear witness. I believe there are many people that join me in not wanting to return to that procedure for harvesting beets. An important factor at that time was that there were alternatives--some joined the army and others went off to the shipyards. I'm not suggesting that these were satisfactory alternatives, but they were alternatives nevertheless. I can't feel that machines have been developed for the ruthless displacement of workers from the fields. I know some of the engineers and they are good people. The major fault as I see it, however, is a lack of communication among the various scientists and scholars. The engineers were in their little cell developing machines and the biologists were over in their laboratories working on plants, sometimes in communication with the engineers in developing plants that were adapted for mechanical harvesting; and the sociologists were over in their little box doing their thing. What was lacking was total communication among all parties that would be concerned in the total problem involving the entire system, not only that portion as applied to production and harvesting.

Finally, I would like to comment on the reorganization activities within the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, which I believe will go a long way toward improving communications among units within the institution and improving its responsiveness to the problems of society. This involves the appointment of

associate deans with responsibilities in subject matter areas in which they are conversant. This should improve communications between the individual faculty member and scientist and the administration of the College. Secondly, through close communication amongst the associate deans, there will be a climate of more awareness on the part of every one of what is happening in various corners of the College. Finally, through the use of appropriate public advisory committees and conferences, such as the one we have participated in today, this should improve communications between the College and the public, and hence, permit us to be more responsive to the needs of more segments of the public.

I thank you very much for permitting me to participate in this conference. I have enjoyed it very much and I shall do my best to represent to other members of the College the issues which have been raised. Thank you.

Comments from University Officials

Victor P. Osterli
Program Leader, Special Projects
Agricultural Extension Service

Conferences such as this are helpful since they provide a forum for the exchange of ideas. Our purpose in attending was primarily to listen and to learn. Our impressions of the conference will be conveyed to appropriate administrative officers. Cooperative Extension is constantly reviewing and modifying its program to meet changing needs, and our programs are indeed people oriented. Some examples are as follows:

a. The Expanded Nutrition Education Program (ENEP) with its proven success is significantly contributing to improving the nutritional habits of the lower income groups.

b. The Community Resources Development (CRD) program has been expanded with the more recent addition of another Specialist.

c. Staff members are involved in many areas in providing better community services and facilities. An illustration of this was the recent completion after eight years of frustration, of the East Dos Palos water and sewer system. Specialists and Farm Advisors assist local Departments of Public Health by providing technical information on implications of various solid waste disposal.

d. County staff members have served on committees to assist in improving farm labor housing and in response to specific requests have provided assistance with maintenance programs and landscaping for self-help housing projects.

e. Environmental improvement programs are a part of several state specialist projects which support such efforts in nearly every county. This primarily involves providing technical assistance and developing informational materials.

f. A recent water policy conference served as a means of getting people and agencies of divergent views together to discuss mutual interests and concerns.

Concluding Remarks

Where Do We Go From Here?

by Isao Fujimoto
Conference Coordinator

It is customary to say after a gathering of this kind, that this is a good start and to offer certain optimistic appraisals. To a certain extent, we can do our share of this. It certainly does help to know that there are others who share similar concerns, and conferences are good for bringing people together, to recognize allies and to flesh out the names that existed as abstractions.

But if we are to acknowledge that it's a start, then we need to spell out what it is we're starting on, and in what direction we're going. It's clear from just this one day's gathering that many questions need answering, the very nature of these questions suggesting follow up action to take. Some questions are a matter of dealing with misinformation or lack of information that seminars, short discussions, or a little homework reading available brochures couldn't clear up, such as basic queries directed to the structure of the University of California, the Experiment Station and Extension Service. But there are other aspects concerning the resources, priorities and claims on the University system that may not be as clear. Neither is it clear who, how, where, and whether the kinds of questions raised by the various publics represented here today can be channeled into the University and challenge interested scientists, given the nature of rewards, and the social and political context of how any kind of work--including scientific research--is responded to, investigated, and disseminated.

We need only remind ourselves that with all the concerns expressed about ecology and the response of the University to broader environmental issues, it's only been about a decade ago that the ideas and writings of Rachel Carson, who did so much to spark the public conscience regarding the quality of life, were damned by scientists on this very campus as irresponsible and useless. This says a lot about the social and political context in which we work. When the chips fall, the curtain also falls on the myth of scientific objectivity, revealing instead the extent to which the influence of vested interest groups, such as the chemical and pesticide industries and petroleum backed foundations, has permeated the University system even more so than the scientific method.

The kinds of questions raised by people associated with groups meeting today--organic farmers, small family farms, farm workers, consumers, the cooperative movement, reflect areas which should legitimately challenge the University in as much as they are societal questions touching on areas that relate to the quality of life in general, and to the connections between rural and urban living as affected by social implications of the work done by agricultural scientists in particular. To be sure, there are differences in vantage points, assumptions, priorities and efinitions, but the over-riding concern is that the University cannot continue to allocate such a high proportion of its resources in the name of growth and efficiency, to tackle priorities for the benefit of limited audiences as those involved in production and corporate agriculture--without eventually reaping serious societal consequences.

This conference is not alone in expressing such concerns. If anything, these views are consistent with our being in the age of accountability. The investigative research of task forces or regulatory agencies, land ownership and pesticides, and specific analysis of land grant colleges such as Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times, Failing the People (study of Cornell), and Dirt on California--regardless of disclaimers by critics, call for the public institutions to be accountable to the larger public, than to be servants of selected groups, selected by nature of their manupulative advantages and and concentrating of power and money.

With the recognition of such challenges and certain opportunities, some quick analysis of where we go on the basis of what we've heard from the conference sessions is in order. This is done especially with the idea of providing a charge to those of us who are part of the University to begin exploring ways to implement what we've deliberated.

Two possibilities will be mentioned now. For want of a better name, we can call one a People's Information and Family Farm Clearinghouse, and the other Ombudsman on Agriculture and Quality of Life.

The purpose of the clearinghouse would be to make the University resources more accessible to the kinds of publics identified here, and also to provide a bridge between such publics and existing offices. It is not meant to duplicate the efforts of Agricultural Extension or the Agricultural Information Service, but is suggested to make better known the resources of the University to those publics that may not have known what the University has to offer, or who may have dismissed the University as a resource, for a variety of political or negative image reasons. The clearinghouse can also serve as a bridge between various publics and faculty and staff, particularly those with expertise and interest in tackling the questions, such as those raised here at the conference.

As to the arrangement of such a clearinghouse, the answer will depend on the nature of the current outreach and the cooperation by the Extension offices. It may be possible that the Extension Service can accommodate what's suggested here, or it may be more feasible to set up a pilot office with a different public image that will be more conducive to bringing together the people and the University. It would help to know what information is already available and can be useful to groups concerned with problems such as consumer issues, organic farming, family farms, farm workers, etc. In this vein, what kinds of publics are served by the existing University facilities and information services? Also, what kinds of questions are raised by groups that aren't the conventional audience?

The second suggestion is for an intellectual advocate of sorts. This would be an office where many of the questions pertaining to the uses and misuses of the University can be channeled; where needed or suggested research by public bodies not having the know-how or current access can be directed; where faculty interested in taking on new projects can be encouraged; where social and environmental impact implications of agricultural research is examined. Also, this office might see to it that the University issue an annual report as is done by most

corporations. Such a report could have a summary statement of its financial resources and sources, the research projects being undertaken, the nature of advisory committees for such research etc. This report could anticipate much of the criticism and queries currently being directed at the University, and also make the University straight forwardly accountable to the public it purportedly serves.

These are but two suggestions made because they seem manageable and also provide some direction to our intent to follow up on the deliberations that we all shared in today. We'd like you to be in touch with us and with each other. We see this gathering, not as just another conference or one-shot affair, but as a basis for an on-going exchange where the public and the institutions of learning it has set up can fulfill the original mandate to serve all the people.